Pest control in cotton fields in Andhra Pradesh

2700. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA-SWAMY: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cotton farmers face serious pest threat to their crops;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken to direct various research establishments to control rampant pest incidence in cotton fields in Andhra Pradesh;

(c) whether any results have been achieved in controlling pests in cotton fields; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF iGRICTITURZ (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) Cotton crop is prone to pest attacks of various kinds. Adverse weather conditions and inability of the farmers to adopt the recommended control measures, sometimes leads to serious pest infestation. There have been no reports of serious pest threats to the cotton crop during the current year. The government is promoting Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in cotton crop to enable the cotton farmers to protect their crop from pest damage with minimum use of chemical pesticide,

(b) Government has accorded high priority to undertake research to control pest incidence in cotton in Andhra Pradesh at the following centres:—

(i) All India Coordinated Cotton Improvement Programme Centre at Lam, Guntur under Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University.

(ii) A special Cess Fund Project under the *Hcliothis* network for Pesticide Application Technology at Guntur. under the Central Tobacco Research Institute. Riijnhmundry.

(iii) A special Indian Council of Agricultural Research/Natural Resources Institute, U.K., funded project on pesticide Resistance Management at Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University, Lam Centre; and

(iv) State Scheme on production, development and demonstration of bio-control agents for popularising Integrated Pest Management.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) It has been possible to train 36 Master Trainers, 260 Agriculture Extension Officers and 1560 farmers of Andhra Pradesh during the last two years to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in cotton. The IPM Project relies on conservation and augmentation of pest control agents, regular monitoring of pest situation and preferential adoption of cultural and mechanical control measures, use of biocides and judicious use of chemical pesticides. This has enabled the cotton farmers to effectively manage the pest situation with reduced levels of pesticide application.

Reports on World-wide Famine

2701. SHRI JOY NADUKKARA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports to the effect that the world is going' to" face a famine within 25 years;

(b) if so, what efforts Government propose to make our nation capable of jumping over such situation; and

(c) whether Government would give special priority to convert uncultivated lands to cultivated ones and what incentive is proposed to be given to agriculturists who are willing to cultivate on virgin lands?

THE MINISTER ' OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) The Government is not aware of any such report.